THE YEAR WAS GOOD

WHOLESALE TRADE OF RICHMOND BETTER THAN WAS EXPECTED.

MARKED IMPROVEMENT IN SOME LINES

Various Houses Report Having Extory With Largely-Increased Sales Outlook for 1898 Very Bright.

The wholesule trade of Richmond dur ing 1897 was, upon the whole, satisfac tory. In some lines this is especially true, there having been marked improve ment over 1896. In others the dealers did not do so well as in years past, bu in no line was there a falling off of con-

great achievement to hold their ewn in days, when the stringency is owding so many to the wall, and neceshave all been able to do this, and that many have been able to extend their trade into new fields, with a resulting in-

ter things in 1898, which seems general, ire well-founded. The wholesale mer and manufacturers unite with the retail ers in the belief that times will be bet-ter, which is a long step towards pros-Dispatch by the wholesale dealers of able degree in their expression of high

THEY HAVE EXTENDED TRADE. To the Editor of the Dispatch:

trade) for supplying contractors, business has not been up to the usual mark, on account of the fact that few of them have had contracts of any size. We feel, however, that we have furnished our share of the goods used in this line.

In our wholesale department, by greater exertion, and taking in new territory, we have brought our total seles quite up to what we anticipated.

we have drought of the weather that the weather that the store better prospects still. With the building of the electric power plants on the river, which will give our manufacture. ng interests an impetus, and we trust the beginning at least of the great im-rovements of the Chesapeake and Ohio railway, and the inauguration of the sugar-beet industry, all lines of business in the city will be benefited, some directly, others indirectly; but the stimulus will A. B. CLARKE & SON.

THEIR TRADE HAS INCREASED. To the Editor of the Dispatch: Our business has been fairly satisfac

tory the past year. The severe drough n the fall affected same somewhat, and the low price of cotton has injured south-ern trade during the past two months. Still, the year as a whole shows a slight

result in a vastly improved condition o our entire agricultural interests, which is bound to affect favorably the prosperity and advancement of all of our people.

Very truly yours, T. W. WOOD & SONS,

SOUTHERN TRADE IMPROVED.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:
Our business for 1897 has been about as large as the previous year and equally satisfactory. There was a decided improvement in the southern trade until cotton reached the present low price. Our collections have been good. We think the conditions promise some improvement in 188, although we do not expect any very great herease. If the expect any very great increase. If the improvements that are promised our city for 1888 are restized, it will necessarily improve our local conditions.

HARWOOD BROTHERS,

Dealers in Olis.

FAR BETTER THAN EXPECTED. To the Editor of the Dispatch: We are happy to say that our business for the past year has been very good, and is now holding up far better than

we have any reason to expect. We have every reason to believe from present indi-cation that our business for 1898 will surpass any previous year.

HOME BREWING COMPANY.

TRADE CONSIDERABLY INCREASED.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:
Our piano, organ, and musical merchandles sales for 1897 show a considerable increase over 1896, which, in turn,
exceeded the preceding year. There has been a steady and healthy growth in our line since the panic year 1833, when all commercial enterprises suffered alike,

The plane and organ accomplishment is now recognized as an essential part of the education of one's family, and owing to the easy instalment feature, the opiano and the casy instalment feature, the opiano and a home in the humblest parior, where the firest talent is often developed. We think 1888 promises to be a "banner year," as judged by the reports of our baneling men and other indications of a local character. In our opinion the great-

bravelling men and other indications of a est benefit to music and business generally would be derived from a more elastic currency in the hands of country bankers, who could supply the planter and farmer with facilities which would enable them to pursue their operations with economy on a business footing.

WALTER D. MOSES & CO.

WAS HARDLY EVER BETTER.

To the Editor of the Dispatch: My business has increased more during the past year than any previous one since 1800, and I am happy to state that I feel satisfied, from present indications, that it will continue to increase during the coming year. What our city wants less croakers and all the business men to join the Young Men's Business Association and the Chamber of Commerce, and help to boom the grandest city of South. JOHN MURPHY. of the Murphy's Hotel.

SAYS THE DISPATCH DID IT.

To the Editor of the Dispatch: Our business for 1897 has far surpassed our expectations. In regard to the out-

look for spring, must say things never looked brighter in our line. We feel that had it not been for the Dispatch we would hardly have been able to talk as we do, for hardly a day passes

that some one does not come in and ask for goods which we had advertised in your most valuable paper.

Very respectfully,

MORTON C. STOUT & CO.,

Merchant Tallor. PROSPECTS VERY BRIGHT.
To the Editor of the Dispatch:

The glue trade for 1897 was not very To the Editor of the Dispatch;

active, on account of decline in manufacturing in nearly all lines using glue, and overstock on cheaper grades. Of fine glues there is a very small supply on hard

The photograph trade has been very much cut us among the professionals, and prices are very low. The amateur trade has increased very much, being the best I have had in the twelve years I

ave sold photographic supplies. The 'cycle trade to July was very good, when there was a cut in prices by ral makers. The wheel I represent was not reduced in price until November, when the 1908 wheels came out, since which time trade has been fair for this season of the year. Prospects for 1898 trade are very bright, as the wheel I represent has given perfect satisfaction in 1897. THOMAS CHRISTIAN.

NEVER DID SO WELL BEFORE.

To the Editor of the Dispatch: We have sold in 1897 more goods, and shipped them over a wider territory than in any other year, and our sales for the spring of 1808 are greater than for any

similar year in our long experience.

The outlook in the cotton country is poor, owing to unprecedentedly low prices for the staple, but the prospects in the grain, tobacco, and cattle sections are good. Notwithstanding all adverse cir-umstances, we expect and we intend to

STEPHEN PUTNEY & CO., Boots and Shoes.

NEARLY A RECORD-BREAKER.

To the Editor of the Dispatch: The volume of our business for 1897 has been larger than in any previous year since 1893. We believe the prospects are indicative of as good as year for

WOODWARD & SON. Lumber Dealers.

MUCH BETTER BUSINESS THAN IN

To the Editor of ne Dispatch: For the first six months of 1897 we ound no improvement in business over

1896; but from July to January the sales of each month have been in excess of the same time last year, and, as a whole, our cusiness for 1897 is considerably ahead of

Our wholesale business with North and South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia has been above the average this season, and especially in the holiday line of china, brica-brac, toys, etc., having sold a better class of these goods than than ever before for Christmas goods and by the middle of September we had as many orders as we could handle, and

early in October we were forced to put on an extra force and longer hours in order to keep up with the heavy demand As to business for 1898 in our line, we do not believe that any one knows what it will be, as there has been considerable advance in earthenware, china, etc., and with increased prices, which all jobbers will be forced to make, we believe it will have a tendency to hold back orders for a time, at least, from the counter mechanics but we believe that in a

try merchants, but we believe that in a few months everything will straighten diself out, and give us a good business for 1898. Very truly yours, E. B. TAYLOR COMPANY,

China and Glassware. JEFFERSON'S PATRONAGE IN-

To the Editor of the Dispatch: Business at the Jefferson for the past year, and especially the past six months sects for the ensuing year are very much put in many additional private baths to accommodate the increased number of ourists, who demand the same. There are several improvements nearing com-pletion, which will be of material ad-vantage to the patrons of the Jefferson. P. M. FRY, Manager.

THE OUTLOOK IS BETTER. To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Our business for 1897 was not as our business for 1896 was not as good as it was for 1896. For the month of December our business was light for the first part, but since the 20th it has been very good. I think the outlook for 1898 is encouraging. Yours truly,

Appet Southern Extrems Company.

Agent Southern Express Company. IMPROVEMENT IN SHOE TRADE.

To the Editor of the Dispatch: We are glad to report an improvement over recent years, and our hopeful expectation of continued inprovement for the coming year. Our own State is better on than she has been for years, in conse-

than she has been for years, in consequence of better prices for grain and tobacco, and we believe our southern neighbors are, as a rule, prospering, not-withstanding the low price of cotton.

Allow us to say that we think our papers should take up the question of better terminal facilities for our city by etter terminal facilities for our city by the Chesapeake and Ohio and Southern the Chesapeake and Ohio and Southern railways. The present shantles have been used as depots ever since the war, and would be a disgrace to a country village. WINGO, ELLETT & CRUMP,

WAY PAVED FOR PROSPERITY. To the Editor of the Dispatch:

The business conditions through a considerable part of 1897 were favorable, and very indication pointed to an exceeding prosperous year's work, but the dreaded yellow-fever, making its appearance just at the beginning of the best busi-ness season in the fall, and the great drop in the rail, and the great drop in the price of cotton served to de-moralize business in a large part of the South for several months of the year, and we have not yet recovered from the effects of it.

On looking into the matter we find that the farmers are, as far as possible holding their cotton for better prices. holding their cotton.

They are limiting their needs to the barest necessities, and gradually as the cotton now in the hands of the farmers cotton. goes on the narket, it means better b ness and more money in circulation years during the winter months. observation also leads us to believe that the farmers of the South have raised a larger proportion of their own supplies than ever before, and consequently more independent. While there is indication of a great boom in business, the outlook for a substantial and fair business year during 1898 is very bright. The probabilities are that business transactions during the year will be nearer or a cash basis than ever before, and that we are gradually paving the way for a return to solid, prosperous times,

Very respectfully yours, B. F. JOHNSON.

THE BUILDING OUTLOOK BRIGHTER

To the Editor of the Dispatch: The past year has been characterized by great stagnation in all building opera-tions, and as these operations are the tions, and as these operations are the first to feel the general depression in business affairs, and are the last to recuperate, the building interest is still dull and far below the normal conditions. There has been lately, however,

improvement, principally consisting of alterations and additions to old buildings, and the outlook is for greater improve-ment and activity. There are many va-cant houses in the city, but this is due to the hard times and the congregation of several families into one dwelling; but of several families into one dwelling; but with improvement in general business these conditions will no longer exist. The vacant houses are generally old buildings, out of date as to plan and arrangement, and in a more or less dilapidated condition. The chance for a tenant for these houses grows more remote with time, and the sooner these buildings are remodelled or pulled ddwn, the better for the appearance of the city and the possibility of a return to the owner upon the money invested in them. Building materials and labor are now very low in cost, and these properties can be improved now at a much less rost than in the future.

M. J. DIMMOCK.

INCREASE IN FERTILIZER S. LES

Wife of an Oyster-Packer Shoots Herself. NORFOLK, VA., December 31.—(Special.)—At 4:35 o'clock this morning Mrs.

We have had a very gratifying increase of our business this year as compared with 18%. with 1898.

The general business situation appears to us to be encouraging, and we confidently look for further improvement in all lines of business the coming year, as the underlying conditions all seem to be favorable and the people apparently more hopeful.

Yours truly,

ALLISON & ADDISON, Fertilizers.

MUCH BUILDING EXPECTED. To the Editor of the Dispatch: Business in my line has been fair, con sidering the general depression of things. The condition of the lumber and mill-work trade at this time is dull, as it is always so at this time of the year. We look for a great deal of building

ing done in 1898. Respectivity.
F. SITTERDING. Builder and Lumber Dealer.

HEALTHY INCREASE SHOWN.

To the Editor of the Dispatch: We have a right to be thankful that our business has been better during the year now closing than before, and the present conditions are healthy. On account of the low prices of cotton, the growers will receive \$100,000,000 less for their product, which will have not only a depressing effect upon our business, upon trade tributary to Richmond, but upon the whole country. The advanced price of wheat will about half obliterate this amount, which goes principally to Therefore, strict economy and earnest efforts are necessary to make the outlook bright for 1898. RICHMOND AGR'L IMP. CO.

Since March we have been quite busy and though November was quiet, have been coming in quite briskly of late, and we carry into 1888 more work than ever before, and this should en-courage us, with the general trend of improvement, to look for a busy and

RICHMOND LOCOMOTIVE AND MACHINE-WORKS.

ARE PERFECTLY SATISFIED.

To the Editor of the Dispatch: We are glad to be able to report our perfect satisfaction with the business of The outlook for the year about to close. The outlook for 1838 appears bright and prosperous, and we see no reason that would lead us to believe that we will not have a prosperous year. While there is no spasmodic im-provement in trade, there is a general and healthful improvement, and we think 1898 will show better results than for some Yours truly, BALDWIN & BROWN,

Hardware and Cutlery.

LARGE SALES; GOOD COLLECTIONS. To the Editor of the Dispatch:
Taking it all together, we think our trade for the year just closing has been satisfactory. The volume of our trade

has been much larger than ever before but owing to the low prices of goods, of course the amount of business in dollars

We have not suffered this, as in former years, from the continued decline in our goods, as most of them have been very thing has reached "low-water mark, the staple goods in our line are very firm-indeed, some considerable advances have taken place. We think the advance will be general along the whole line, and this being the case, it will make our busi-ness far more satisfactory than it has been for the past five or ten years, with a steadily declining market. Our collections throughout the South

have been wonderfully good, considering the extremely low price of cotton, which has been very disastrous to all closses of business. We do not know of anything to increase the price of this great staple. as the supply seems to be very much in excess of the demand, but we do know

we have bought our usual stock of goods for the coming season, and look for a heavy trade in 1828. The country through which we travel is comparatively hare of goods of all kinds, and whilst we do not think our customers are inclined to buy largely, still we are satisfied that they will have to buy considerably supply their actual wants. seems to be the principle upon which at classes of trade are now proceeding with their business. Our line of credit is very their business. Our line of credit is ver-much more thoroughly scrutinized that ever before, and by strict economy of our part and the part of our trade, w hope for a successful trade in 1898. WATKINS-COTTRELL CO.,

Hardware and Cutlery.

LARGE DEMAND FOR FERTILIZERS To the Editor of the Dispatch: The demand for fertilizers for both spring and fall crops for 1897 has been larger than ever before, the price paid for

the business.)
Crops of all kinds, with local excep tions only, have been abundant. Added to this, the Virginia farmer received the best prices for wheat obtained in a num ber of years, and tobacco is now bringin him much better prices than he has real-ized for some time, and the outlook is encouraging. The cotton planter has been less fortunate, as 5-cent cotton, after pay-ing debts, leaves but little money for

a decreased demand for fertilizers in the cotton States, and a largely increased demand for growing tobacco and other crops grown in Virginia and Piedmont, N. C. S. W. TRAVERS & CO.

BIG FALLING OFF IN ARRESTS. Some 500 Less Than in 1896-The Po-

lice Force Record. The police force is appointed by the Board of Police Commissioners, consisting

of Hon. R. M. Taylor, Mayor and President, and Mesers. Charles G. Bosher, L. C. Figg, John F. Jacob, J. B. Welsh, J. Laube, and D. A. Weinbrum; E. B.

White, clerk.

The police force consists of 100 officers and men, distributed as follows:

Police Headquarters, Room No. 21, City Hall—Major B. F. Howard, chief; Sergeant J. F. Shinberger, clerk; Sergeant A. M. Tomlinson, chief of secret service, and the Major Hellowick. Gibson, L. S. Ro. John T. Hall and C. A. Gibson; L. S. Robins, special duty.

bins, special duty.

First Police-Station, Old Market-Captain, W. L. Thomas; Sergeant W. E. Whitlock, 1; Sergeant J. P. Jeter, 1; Sergeant G. H. Matthews, 1; Sergeant J. A.

geant G. H. Matthews, 1; Sergeant J. A. Otey, 1; patrolmen, 25.
Second Police-Station, Sixth and Marshall streets—Captain, J. B. Angle, 1; Sergeant J. A. Cosby, 1; Sergeant Ro. J. Brooks, 1; Sergeant T. A. Allen, 1; Acting Sergeant, C. H. Talley, 1; patrolmen, 24.

Third Police-Station, Brook avenue and Third Police-Station, Brook avenue and Marshall street—Captain E. P. Hulce, 1, Sergeant A. R. Cousins, 1; Sergeant G. W. Epps, 1; Sergeant W. J. Orange, 1; patrol-

Officer at Police Court, Sergeant R. N Thomas. Four men are detailed for tary duty, and are under Board of Health Changes in the force during the year

Died, 1: resigned, 2: appointed, 3.
Arrests made: White, 1,908; colored,
3,090; misdemeanor, 4,654; felony, 344. Total, 4.998. Number of ordinance viols 2.975. Number of alarms of fire, 152.

SUICIDE IN NORFOLK.

John R. Lawrence, wife of a well-known oyster-packer, committed suicide by shooting herself through the head. Sh had been ill, and there is no doubt that she was temporarily insane when she she was temporarily insane when she committed the act. No other cause can be ascribed. The bullet entered the right temple, and death was instantaneous. The family are prostrated by the affair.

HAD GOOD BUSINESS.

DEALERS GIVE CHEERING RE-PORTS OF THE RETAIL TRADE.

ALMOST UNIVERSALLY DID WELL. Over the Preceding One in Every

The consensus of opinion among the retail dealers of Richmond is that business during 1897 was better than during 1896. Some of the city merchants tell the Dis patch that they saw no improvement but these are in the great minorityminority not so great, however, as that composed of those who found their trade not so good, or who do not expect 1898 to be better than 1897, from a business

point of view. Every branch of trade seems to have done better than in 1896. Decreases in sales are announced in some branches, but in the great majority it will be ob served sales were better, in some cases very much so.

It is natural, then, that the new year should be entered upon with hopefulness. It is gratifying, as well, for a belief in better times makes times better. It seems that they all expect great things during 1898, and their expecting it is par tial assurance, at least, that they will not be disappointed. This is what some of the most prominent retailers of Rich-mond say of 1897, and predict for 1898: Mr. Ike Cohen, of the Cohen Company, dry goods: The trade of our house has

been more satisfactory the past year than in any of at least five previous, and see no reason why the little spurt of prosperity should meet with sudden check prosperity should meet with sudden check just yet. It's my opinion that we are entering a year in which peace and plenty will reign supreme; certainly for those who will keep their mouths open, so as to catch their share.

Mr. Meyer Sycle, dry goods: I think the country in general is in a more prosperous condition than it has been since the end of 1892. Still, we will hardly see the day that the people will spend money as liberally, as lavishly, as they did prior to that time. This is a new era—the

to that time. This is a new era—the methods of living, the methods of doing business, must be changed to suit, and we will have prosperous and happy times. factory, and everything points to in-creased sales in 1898. Our holiday sale were larger than they have been in five years. The majority of our customers did not buy as expensive articles, but the aggregate showed a decided increase

The Globe Shoe and Clothing Company Ourselves-possibly it is not good tast to make personal allusions, but we ar such an excessively young firm that it may be pardoned. We cannot point with pride to a long and distant past. It is only sixteen short months since we made our bow to the Richmond public. In this short negled of time we have business second to none in our line. think the cutlook for 1898 is bright. There is an atmosphere of confidence and a renewed spirit of energy among all classes of trade and industry which presage better times. The country is comparaproportion as it ever will be. So dor let us bemoan over fate, but keep t with the procession, remembering tha 'success begets success'.

Messrs. Miller & Rhoads, dry goods: A

Messrs. Miller & Rhoads, dry goods. A noticeable increase in our business since the ushering in of the fall season, in volume far exceeding any previous ten years, gives rise to hopeful indications for 1895. One of the most healthful signs of prosperity, and one that has a lasting ring to it, is the steady rise in price of raw materials and manufactured pro and give work to the laboring classes for their products, and the result is decidedly increased business from that ection. A summary of our experien rom the past three months seems to assure a prosperous year ahead. Mr. Charles Hutzler, of A. Hutzler's Sons

dry goods: In looking back through the past year I perceive conditions that have required continued watchfulness, care and conservatism of judgment, and fine that our business stands in about the one position it occupied a year ago This is somewhat contrary to busines rules, which require that enterprise must either advance or recede. In seel ing a cause for the above of profitable returns, I find there is a general demoralization of public relationship to sound business principles, which are disturbed by the alluring schemes of gif nterprises, and other devices devoid ven of the redeeming features of gamding. It seems that the merchant foling. It seems that the merchant was irravels out of this path is doomed to struggle awhile longer and wait for moral regeneration. With abiding faith in the ultimate triumph of the higher standard, I calmly look forward to what now not well established-a return of onfidence between buyer and seller. Tur ing from the past and present, and looking forward, the greatest promise in the direction of prosperity may be seen in the firm strengthening of values, which is a reversal of the past four years' ex-perience. This gives the merchant a chance to recuperate his strength, and elps to bring on an era of thrift which under present conditions, would be more beneficial if it approach gradually and with easy strides. The conservative man in business is the conservator of the na-

O. H. Berry & Co., clothing: I undoubtedly think that business is looking upward. Our business has materially increased in the past six months over the corresponding period of a year ago. The popular tendency is toward better-grade goods than has been demanded for the last year or so, which, I think, indicates a much better feeling, and I look for an increased demand for the higher qualities of merchandise for the coming year.

Mesars, Jacob Lewit & Son, dry goods and millinery: Considering the chronic cry which our people have gotten in the habit of using-hard times, no money, and so on-we congratulate ourselves on having been as successful as we really have been during the past year. Our gross amount of sales ran very much ahead of any year during our existence, and we can only complain about one feature of business at the present time and that is the tendency towards low-priced goods, which naturally affects profits greatly. Our holiday trade was xceptionally good, and, to use the month of December as a criterion, the me lists have certainly not cornered all the currency in the land. I think with plenty of good, sound hustling, and a tinge of confidence that our merchants will more than hold their own during the coming

Mr. B. B. Bowles, shoes: Trade has peen satisfactory with me this season, far better than I expected. I can see no reason why I shall not look for better

themselves of this great opportunity, capitalists of other States will come in and enrich themselves in the business. We have as good water power here for manufacturing as anywhere in this country, and I believe the moneyed men of Richmond are wakening along this

line. To advance business rapidly, business-men must come together and exchange their views along the different lines of business. Our banks have stood the test through all the crisis of the imes, and looking at things from every standpoint, business will greatly improve standpoint, business will greatly improve with proper management. How much time has been taken up in the last twelve months in assemi ing to devise plans to make progress in this city? May every merchant and men of every branch of business put on the whole armor and win the victory for the year of 1898.

Mr. A. Greentree, clothler: I am glad to say that my business was far better in 1897 than in 1896. There seems to be more money with the workingmen. If 1898 will be as good as 1897 I shall be very Mr. R. L. Winston, of the Nowlan

Company, jewellers: Our business for the year has been very satisfactory, and

while no class of merchants have proba-bly suffered more from the general de-pression in business for the past two or hree years than the retail jeweller, yet the activity shown in this line for the past three months is very encouraging.
Our fall and holiday business far surpasses our expectations, and we find the demand for finer and more expensive goods returning to such an extent that goods returning to such at we shall, with the coming year, increase our facilities, with the assurance of a larger and more extensive business. An-other evidence for encouragement is that there seems to be a better disposition on the part of our people to encourage nome exterprise, and if our merchants can only succeed in satisfying the buyers in our midst who are disposed to deal in the larger cities that they can do equally as well in our home market, not the merchant only, but our entire community will be greatly benefited. will be greatly benefited.

Mr. Charles J. Shuman, shoes: The aggregate of business for 1897 compares favorably with 1896, with no general improvement. The closing months, November and December, while showing decided gains, do not effect the aggregate on account of the dull months of September and October 18 the husbages for 1898 can and October. If the business for 1898 can be estimated by the closing months of 1897, then we can look forward to great improvement in the retail shoe business; otherwise, we can only await results.

C. F. Cross Shoe Company: We feel very much encouraged with the trade this fall, and look forward to a good spring business. The public are beginning to realize that there is no practical economy in cheap, trashy goods, and, therefore, the cheap craze is on the The public are beg wane. We have persistently adhered to time tried, reliable lines, and creasing sales are evidence of their true

Messrs. W. S. Hugg & Co., china: Our business so far in our brief career has been remarkably encouraging, and, considering the way trade has opened up with us, we cannot help but feel that our expectations have been fully realized, and that trade is getting back to a prosperous state. The reports from all over the country are for better times, and that trade has been better this season than for some time past. The many manufacturers of time past. The many manufacturers of goods in our line have been pushed to their utmost to supply their demands; in fact, some were so bad off that early in the season they were refusing additional orders. This fact alone speaks for itself. We look forward to the trade in 1888 to continue on the line of improvement, and that next year will be more satisfactory than for many years past. than for many years past. Mr. J. G. Corley, of the Richmond Music

Company: The plano trade with us during the past year has indeed been very satisfactory. Since September 1st trade has been good; in fact, better than it has for been good; in fact, better than it has lot several years past. One very noticeable feature in our line is a better demand for high-grade instruments. This is quite a good indication that times are improving. Collections on old accounts could be better; still, we find collections somewhat again; than in 1896. While we do not anticipate a boom for 1898, we firmly believe that the worst is over, and look forward to a steady revival of business. Mr. Charles Branned, of the Chase Brothers Pidno Company: Business with our company in this territory for the const year has been somewhat peculiar.

our company in this territory for the past year has been somewhat peculiar. We we had periods of unusual good business, while some months have shown a decrease, as compared with the corresponding months in the former year. We attribute some increase in trade to advanced prices of farm productions, and have observed indications of general improvement. Upon the whole, our business for the year past has been very satisfactory, and as large as anticipated. We believe from the present industrial as factory, and as large as anticipated. We believe from the present industrial as well as political situation, that business may be conducted during the coming year with success, but recognize the importance of old rules in strict personal attention, judicious advertising, and economy, which we believe will be found necessary as show profitable results. Mr. G. M. Smithdeal, of the Smithdeal

Mr. G. M. Smithdeal, of the Smithdeal Business College: I am glad to be able to write that while we, in company, with nearly all other forms of business, have somewhat felt the pressure of the finan-cial stringency of the country, we have cial stringency of the country, we have always been on the upward grade in numbers and influence and general pro-gressiveness. Our splendid new build-ing, now in course of construction at the northeast corner of Ninth and Broad streets, is a practical demonstration of this fact. The school was moved into its present quarters in order to get more room, and now has again outgrown its home. One particularly gratifying feature has been the constantly growing confidence that business-men seem to reconfidence that business-masser seem of re-pose in us. Our prospects for 1898 are very good, indeed, and we hope that at its close we shall have even still greater cause for gratitude to the bountiful giver of all prosperity.

Messrs. Smyth Brothers & Kline, horses and mules: Our business this fall is just about on a par with the fall trade of 1886, with a possible slight advantage in favor of 1897. "Prices about the same favor of 1897. "Prices about the same for horses and mules, but demand more regular.

Our business is such that we are thrown in contact with people from all parts of the country, and all report progress to a man for 1898, except those depending on cotton for a livelihood. The dealers do-ing business in cotton districts have tough sailing, but let it be said: If all classes of business people would hustle the same as do the horse and mule dealers, there would be less hard times and more busi-

Mr. F. W. Dabney, boots and shoes: We have been more than pleased with our business for the year just closed. While we have had to do a great deal of business on a close margin, yet our profits on the whole have been satisfactory. The greater part of our sales have been or medium-priced goods. Our fall and winter business has shown a marked improvement over the first haif of the year. This is accounted for in a great measure by the good prices attained by our country customers for such farm products as they have to sell. agement, and see no reason why the year of 1898 should not be better than 1897.

Mr. J. H. Bushy, furniture: My business for the year of 1897 has been fairly good, even beyond my expectation, for which I feel grateful to my friends and patrons, and in view of the business outlook for the coming year of 1898, I feel assured that business will greatly improve, and on the faith of the improvement will greatly enlarge my business. Richmond, in my mind, in a few years will be one of the leading cities in the United States. We need more enterprising men in the manufacturing business, and if men of our city fail to avail

1895 will be a better business year in many respects than we have had in our line for some years past.

D. Buchanan & Son, jeweilers: In regard to business for the year just ending—1897—we can truthfully state that the volume of business done surpasses any year since 1899, and, naturally, we feet very much gratified with the good re-sults of our labors. In regard to the prospects of 1888, we feel convinced that they are good, the effects of the panic are gradually passing away, and in the future it will only be a matter of history.
The general public appear to be more active, the merchants as a whole are in a better frame of mind. The manufacturers in our line have a great many orders given them in 1837 yet to be filled, and are working overtime. As a matter of fact, when the general public, the merchants and the manufacturers, one and all, are in the condition as above stated, the future of 1898 is assured.

The Star Clothing-House: Speaking The Star Clothing-House: Speaking from a business standpoint, we are glad to say that the year 18% has been the most successful one for the past two years. Business has improved wonderfully with us during the past few months. Our outlook for 18% is a very good one, and if all of the factories and different places of work will start up, as we hope they will do, we expect even a better year than the past one.

has always been forward, and our en-deavor has been to keep in the front rank work of the last two years, when an kinds of competition had to be contended with, and strong men were falling by the way, we are led to exclaim, "Hitherto hath the Lord led us." Our outlook for the future is good. Our orderwook for of the procession. Looking back on the work of the last two years, when an kinds of competition had to be contended the future is good. Our endeavor is to keep a very full and complete stock, that we may meet the needs of every customer, and while we make a specialty of fine and and while we make a specialty of fine and high-grade furniture, our stock of medium and cheap is very complete. Returning thanks for past favors, we piedge for the future our best efforts to furnish the good people of Richmond and Virginia a strictly first-class and up-to-date stock of furniture to select from. We have enlarged our upholstery department, and can serve our ratrons satisfactorily in that deour patrons satisfactorily in that de

John E. Rose & Co., stoves, crockery, and glassware: We have found business for 1897 entirely satisfactory, and our ran and Xmas trade far exceeding 1896. Our outlook for next year is encouraging, having several large contracts to start during January.

INCREASE IN JOBBING TRADE.

Reports Gratifying Despite Yellow-Fever and Low Price of Cotton. Compiled by J. H. Whitty, of the Marion Howard Improved Mercantile Agency.) Copyrighted.

The volume of business in the Richmond jobbing trade during 1897 shows an increase over the previous record, which is due to renewed energy on the part of merchants, as well as increases in the prices of some commodities. The first nine months of 1897 were the

most satisfactory, and during that period some headway was gained, but the yellow-fever scare and fall in price of cotton later on threw trade into a dormant condition, where it has since been, awaiting an active awakening. With all, however, there were some gains made, and houses report breaking last year's record and going ahead 'as much as 34 per cent.

The higher figures, however, were few, and these firms, speaking of this year's future, say: "The outlook does not hold

out many promises just now, and it looks out many promises just now, and it looks like harder and more intelligent work. This work, however, must be done, and with no let-up, and good business anywhere to grasp we intend to put forth our best efforts and pull out another good year." With this sort of determination on the part of Richmond's jobbing houses, there is little fear of this year's future. While the immediate outlook is not promising, still stocks in general store merising, still stocks in general store mer-chants' hands are limited, and through-out the tobacco sections there are glimmering rays of light. Undoubtedly, there is much work ahead for this year. grasp all trade in sight. The subjoined table shows the result of the trade for the

past year: Article, Class, Article, Capital in Annual Business. Sales. Groceries and Ilquors .. \$2,200,000 \$12,225,000 Dry goods and notions.. 295,000 Provisions Fancy groceries and to-350,000 2,500,750 475,000 Boots and shoes 480,000 Drugs and licorice Hardware and agricul-265,000 Rallway and plumbers' supplies Coal and wood .. 315,000 Stoves, tin, china, and nishes Hay, feed, seed, and 235,000 468,250 Books, stationery, and 180,000 395,270 paper Sewing machines and 275,130 150,000 178,125 Wood and willow-ware. 65,000 158,160 Carpets and upholstery. Sporting, bleyele, and rubber goods 65,000 Millinery and straw 45,000 goods

Totals \$7,730,000 \$30,413,032 RICHMOND FAILURES IN 1897. No. Assets, billties, Groceries, liquors, and

Groceries, liquors, and saloons 20 \$ 22,900 \$ 62,100 Dry-goods, shoes, and clothing 11 105,150 217,200 Miscellaneous 21 409,350 795,000 52 \$537,400 \$1,074,300 RICHMOND CLEARING. Increase 1897 1,858,889 35

Petition for Ellyson's Release. Mr. H. D. Armstrong, a juryman on the panel that convicted Major Ellyson, a negro, of assault several months ago, presented a petition to Governor O'Fer-rall yesterday for Ellyson's release. The

rall yesterday for Ellyson's release. The petition is grounded on new evidence in the case, and upon affidavits that some of the witnesses for the preascution committed perjury. Governor O'Ferrall declined to consider the matter, but advised Mr. Armstrong to present the petitional of the petition of t tion to Governor J. Hoge Tyler. Reception at Mrs. C. R. Wren's. Mrs. C. R. Wren, of No. 415 north Twenty-eighth street, gave a very en-joyable entertainment to her friends last Tuesday night. The programme consist-ed of singing and recitations, after which

refreshments were served. Those present were Mesdames C. R. Wren and Muir,

and Misses Walker, Walton, Muir, Ivy, Nunally, and Messrs, E. W. Baudy, Mayo, Archer, Lynwood Wren, and many

THE OUTLOOK BRIGHT

(CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE)

The directory of the Chamber, its Trams

Bureau, and its standing and special

committees, in addition to the special

ber or its Board of Directors. WORK OF THE CHAMBER.

matters already mentioned, have had the usual number and variety of questions to consider in the regular course of business. They have discharged their respective duties with most commendable zeal and intelligence, but the most serious drawback to the usefulness of these agencies. after profound and extended consideration of their benefits and full recognition of their absolute necessity, is the lack of a more general and substantial support from the community at large. fully with us during the past few months. Our outlook for 1898 is a very good one, and if all of the factories and different places of work will start up, as we hope they will do, we expect even a better year than the past one.

Sydnor & Hundley, furniture: With thankful hearts we close 1897. Our motto has always been forward, and our enhancement of the past one who create these agencies and who may be looked upon in the light of their be looked upon in the light of their principals or constituents. The effort maintain the organization and existence of these agencies which is most unfortunate. The vast amount of time and mate. The vast amount of time and energy which has been given by the officers and committees of the Chamber and its Traffic Bureau in raising the money and sometimes in securing the attention absolutely necessary, diverts

entirely too much of their attention from

the important work and direct objects of

PATRONAGE OF HOME INDUSTRIES.

ground for complaint in this community that home industries are not as loyally

patronized by our own people as they should be. Upon equal terms home institutions should always have the preference, as by such patronage success in many meritorious instances, and nearly always in the inception of such enterprises, is assured. effective manner can they be advertised abroad than by their products being used at home, and in no more effective manner can other and varied industries be attracted to such a centre. While we should always be glad to welcome the the people of a community are not consistent who advocate new enterprises and outside capital but neglect to sustain, which is embarked the capital of their fellow citizens. A homely but ap-illustration of what is necessary for a community aspiring to decided in will be regarded under such circumstances s afforded by Aesop in his fable of the lark and her young. He describes the owner of a ripe wheat field as saying. The time has come when I must send to all my neighbors to help me with my harvest, which speech when related by her young caused the mother of the brood to say, there was no occasion to move her nest then, for the man who sends to his friends to help him with his harvest is not really in earnest. But when the owner saw the wheat shedding its grain for excess of ripeness and said. I will go myself to-morrow with my laborers and will get in the harvest, the lark said to her young: It is time now to be off for the man is in earnest this time. He reap the field himself. The moral is: Self help is the best help. And the moral seems equally true whether it be applied to the simple wheat field of the husbandman or to the more complex and varied fields of industrial and commercial

Christmas for the Children.

The "Christmas for the Children of the Poor" of Church Hill, which, Carought the broad sympathy and Christian charity of Misses Pearl and Ruby Bodecharity of Misses Pearl and Ruby Bode-ker, assisted by other charitable ladies and members of the city mission, has become a custom, was given Thursday afternoon at Corcoran Hall. Fully 200 children were present, and large/as the

these ladies had provided a present Dr. Goodwin, rector of St. John's, made a short and appropriate talk to the chil-dren. Little Misses Gracie Wood and dren. Little Misses Gracle Wood and Sadie Newman sang, with Miss Chenautt accompanying on the plano, Mr. How-ard Holland, of McCabe's School Glee ard Holland, of McCabe's School Glee Club, also sang, with Mr. William Weiler accompanying him. After the programme had been concluded old Santa-Claus, impersonated by Mr. George Gret-

ter, entered upon a sled drawn by little Roger Wilson's goat-team. Roger Wilson's goat-team.

The ladles who actively assisted the Misses Bodeker in despensing the good things were Mrs. Mary E. Snelling, Mrs. Green, Mrs. William Murray, Miss Dora Pugh, Mrs. Maria Robinson, Miss Lizzia Baldwin, Mrs. Preston Nash, and Miss Maggie Prosser.

The Virginia Stock Company. Subscriptions for season tickets have

Subscriptions for season tickets have been coming in to the support of the Virginia Stock Company at a lively rate during the week, and the promoters of the enterprise are now sanguine of a splendid success.

The plans of Manager Benjamin Tuthfill appear to have struck a popular chord, having aroused the interest of the regular theatre-patrons to an extent far beyond his anticipations. He is particularly encouraged by the enthusiasm the ladies have shown in behalf of the proposed venture.

many prominent people are among those who have already secured tickets, and the greater proportion of the subscribers are lending their active aid to seture the

Mr. P. M. Fry, the host of the Jefferson, is generously using his influence with the guests of his hotel, and voluntary assistance is being extended on every side,

Norfolk and Petersburg will be given the opportunity to be taken into the circuit next week. Persecuted a Chinaman,

An assault was made upon a Chinaman last Thursday night by two boys, whose identity has not yet been established. Lee Hung is the proprietor of a laundry near the corner of Main and Cherry streets, and on the night in question he was working in his store about 10 o'clock, when his window was smashed and he was street on the chest with a large was struck on the chest with a large granite spall. His assallants made good their escape in the dark, and the unforunato Chinaman, who is suffering sely able to give Sergeant Gibson a very

Robbed in Jackson Ward.

meagre description of them. The case is in good hands, however, and will probably be worked out to a conclusion that

be satisfactory, at least to Lee

The police are investigating the circumstances surrounding the robbery of a young business-man, which occurred a few nights ago in Jackson Ward. The gentleman was found in an alley in a semi-conscious condition, his pockets were empty, and he had been robbed of his coat, vest, and even his shoes.